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gether in her ardent studies and sedulous searches, but her diligent labor of love will, I trust, bear fruit some day—and not very long hence.

CARL A. KRAUSE.

Jamaica High School, N. Y.

### THE KINGS OF *Andromaque*, V, 2

In *Modern Language Notes* for June, Mr. Colbert Searles calls attention to the different readings assigned to the fourth line of the following passage from *Andromaque*:

Quoi? sans qu'elle employât une seule prière,  
Ma mère en sa faveur arma la Grèce entière?  
Ses yeux pour leur querelle, en dix ans de combats,  
Virent périr {trois} rois qu'ils ne connoissoient pas?  
Et moi, je ne prétends que la mort d'un parjure,  
Et je charge un amant du soin de mon injure.<sup>1</sup>

Hermione is here seeking to justify her attack upon Pyrrhus by reference to the number of kings who perished on account of her mother, Helen of Troy. Mr. Searles thinks she has in mind three kings because that is the number given by Mesnard in the edition of his *Œuvres de J. Racine* which appeared in 1885–1888. *Vingt rois*, which he finds in Mesnard's earlier edition<sup>2</sup> and in most other modern texts, he considers due to "the obvious difficulty of identifying from the natural sources (the Homeric poems) the 'three kings' to whom Hermione refers." His article attempts to remove this difficulty by naming these three kings. As Homer's warriors were well known to Helen, he turns ingeniously to Dictys of Crete, from whose narrative he exhumes Phorbas, Eetion, and Teuthras, all kings, all unknown to Helen, all satisfactorily slain. To explain the difficulty offered by their not dying before her eyes, he takes the line to mean "saw

it come to pass that three kings whom she did not know perished in her cause."

When I read Mr. Searles's article, I asked myself how Racine the artist, the man who so thoroughly understood his audience, could possibly have been guilty of writing *trois* rather than *vingt*. The latter is, of course, a round number and with it the line means merely that many stranger-kings died for Helen's sake, as everybody in the audience was ready to believe. *Qu'ils ne connoissoient pas* contrasts with *amant* as *vingt* contrasts with *un*. There is nothing in the passage that could not be at once understood. If, however, Racine wrote *trois*, he used a definite number, which would be justified only if his auditors readily understood to what kings he referred. As few of them had ever heard of Phorbas, Eetion, and Teuthras, reference to them in this connection would be a piece of pedantry worthy of Chapelain or d'Aubignac and entirely foreign to Racine.

As this charge against Racine's dramatic sense rested entirely on the text of Mesnard's second edition, I determined to go to the sources and discover where the error belonged. Accordingly I examined at the Bibliothèque Nationale the following editions of *Andromaque*: those that appeared, separately from his other works, at Paris in 1668 and 1673, at Amsterdam in 1682; those that appeared in the dramatist's collected works published at Paris in 1676, 1681, 1687 (two editions), 1696, 1697, at Amsterdam in 1678 and 1690. These are, I believe, all the editions that appeared during Racine's lifetime. I examined also the important edition of 1702, said to have been supervised by Boileau. Mesnard declares that he bases his text on the edition of 1697, the last which Racine could have corrected, and draws his variants from the editions of 1668 and 1673.

Now every one of these editions, those used by Mesnard as well as the others, gives *vingt rois*. There can be no doubt about the correctness of this reading. The error of writing *trois* evidently arose in the composition of Mesnard's second edition, for his first edition gives *vingt*, as Mr. Searles remarks. The fact that

<sup>1</sup> V, 2, lines 1477–1482.

<sup>2</sup> 1865–1873.

Mesnard adds no note of explanation indicates that he did not know that the change had been made. Probably a type-setter substituted the word *trois* because his eye fell upon the following *rois*, which so closely resembles it.

Fortunately Mesnard has not led many editors into error. Among the few editions in which the mistake occurs is that of *Tous les chefs-d'œuvre de la littérature française*. I am glad to find that our college texts edited by F. M. Warren and B. W. Wells have retained the correct reading, *vingt rois*.

H. CARRINGTON LANCASTER.

Amherst College.

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#### BRIEF MENTION

Among the last books to appear before the outbreak of the war was *le Roman de Renard* (Paris, Champion, 574 pp.). The beginnings of this remarkable study by Mr. Lucien Foulet date back a number of years, a fact which renders the more noteworthy the resemblance of its main thesis to Mr. Bédier's "il faut étudier les chansons de geste d'après ce que nous savons du onzième siècle": Mr. Foulet would have us add a parallel dictum for the *Renard*, and makes an analysis of the group of Renard poems in their setting of the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century which is remarkable not alone for its thoroughness but for the comprehensiveness of the results obtained. Beginning with an examination of the internal evidence contained in the various "branches" of the *Renard*, the author finds multiple indications of their relative and their absolute chronology, and believes that he can locate them in correct order between 1170 and 1210. In Branch II plus Branch V<sup>a</sup> he sees the original French poem of the series, the first specimen of the "heroi-comic epic" and a concave mirror of the aristocratic society of the times. The theme was ready to hand in the beast stories of a clerical Latin work, the *Ysengrimus*, but the epic character it takes is a stroke of the author's genius. Br. II-V<sup>a</sup> forms a unified poem, in which Mr. Foulet sees a satirical touch: Noble the Lion is Louis VII; Musard the Camel is the papal legate Pietro di Pavia. The marked success of this poem resulted in a series of imitations, adaptations, or continuations that

constitute the Renard cycle. Various sources, as was natural, were utilized in the series: *Ysengrimus*, fables, sermons, clerical stories, every-day life, and what not, but the whole hypothetical framework of a lost antecedent Renard cycle vanishes. Br. II-V<sup>a</sup> is the first French work on the subject, and is derived from the *Ysengrimus*, itself a clerical adaptation of the *Æsopic fables*; the *Reinhart Fuchs* is an imitation of the earlier Renard branches; direct evidences of a medieval fox-and-wolf folklore are absent; modern folklore is the creature and not the creator of the immensely popular and widely imitated Renard cycle. The conscientious fullness of treatment and the judicial attitude of the author are striking. It is interesting to note how he recognizes where his argument or his hypothesis fails to reach the almost universal high average of solidity and himself makes in such cases the proper qualifications. In one instance he has perhaps let his personal conviction find expression in over-positive terms: his definite attribution of the first French poem (Br. II-V<sup>a</sup>) to Pierre de Saint-Cloud, along with the conclusion that its original title was *Renard et Isengrin*, is based on evidence that constitutes a reasonable presumption rather than a definite proof. Again, while it is not unnatural, in the light of the mention of the *Tristan* in the prologue of Br. II, to consider with Mr. Foulet the insertion of the adultery motif a reminiscence of the Yseut-Tristan-Marc situation, such a conclusion is not inevitable. It is a merry rogue that the author of the branch is depicting, a rogue from whom the sympathies of the auditor must not be harshly alienated, and this is sufficient to account for a softening of the rape of Hersent by the introduction of an antecedent acquiescence. But these are mere questions of detail. The book is stimulating, interesting, and convincing, and next to the *Légendes épiques* the most important contribution in recent years to the study of Old French literature.

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The publishers of Storm's *Collected Works* have recently added a supplementary volume to the eight volumes issued some years ago (Theodor Storm, *Spukgeschichten und andere Nachträge zu seinen Werken*, Sämtliche Werke, Bd. 9, Braunschweig u. Berlin, Westermann, 1913). The main title "Spukgeschichten," which has superseded Storm's own "Am Kamin," seems meretricious, and was probably intended as a bait for the general public. Under